

Coinage changes cool off while Carter warms up

By Roger Boye

PRESIDENT-ELECT Jimmy Carter's administration could affect the talked-about changes in the United States coinage system.

Among changes the Bureau of the Mint has been considering are production of a useful, smaller-sized dollar coin and elimination of the cent.

But the person Democrat Carter appoints as Treasury secretary could have his [or her] own ideas on what coinage changes, if any, to support. [The Bureau of the Mint is part of the Treasury Department.]

Much of the work on and talk about coinage changes have taken place in the mint, directed by Mrs. Mary Brooks. She is serving a second five-year term, which expires in 1979.

But given the political nature of her appointment, it is possible Mrs. Brooks might resign

when the new administration takes office in January. Mrs. Brooks, the widow of Republican U.S. Sen. C. Wayland Brooks of Illinois, was appointed director in 1969 by President Nixon after a long career in Republican Party politics. She was assistant chairman of the Republican National Committee and a Republican state senator in Idaho when appointed mint director.

Obviously, a new mint director would also affect any coinage change recommendations the Treasury Department might make to Congress.

ORDERS FOR 1977 proof sets will not be accepted until next April, in an attempt to reduce the number of collector complaints of slow delivery, Mrs. Brooks has announced.

In past years, the mint has accepted orders for proof sets in the late fall and winter, and promised collectors to mail the sets during the calendar year. That meant, for example, that a

collector could order a 1976 proof set in November, 1975, and not receive it until December, 1976.

Under the new procedure, the maximum wait for delivery will be [only?] nine months, because the mint promises to send out all 1977 proof sets by Dec. 31, 1977.

For the same reasons, orders for 1977 mint [uncirculated] sets will not be accepted until fall, 1977. [Orders for 1976 mint sets were accepted last February, March, and April.]

If you want to be placed on the mint's mailing list to receive proof set order cards when they are distributed next spring, write to the Bureau of the Mint, 55 Mint St., San Francisco, Cal. 94175.

THE 34TH EDITION of R. S. Yeoman's popular "Blue Book" is now on sale in most coin stores and hobby shops.

This 1977 edition of "Handbook of U.S. Coins," as in past editions, lists the average price dealers would pay for U.S. coins. Values are compiled from information supplied by more than 50 contributors.

Prices of several coins, including Barber dimes, quarters and half-dollars, are higher than those in the 1976 edition. But the price of the 1977 edition is the same as the 1976 edition —\$2.95.

"BIG DEAL" IS what the British government's Royal Mint might say when the U. S. Mint publicizes the fact that it makes coins for about a half-dozen foreign governments.

According to the Royal Mint's fiscal year report, it received coin production orders from about 50 countries, so many orders that it was forced to subcontract some of them to other mints.